

MILWAUKEE COUNTY COMMISSION FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

Deb Falk-Palec, Chairperson
Donald Natzke, Director
February 10, 2014

MINUTES

St. John's Properties
1800 N. Prospect Ave
1:00 PM

ITEM I CALL TO ORDER

Vice-Chair Riachards called the February meeting of the Commission for Persons with Disabilities to order at 1:10pm.

ITEM II ROLL CALL

Vice-Chair Richards led the self-introductions of those present. Commissioners present for the meeting of the Milwaukee County Commission for Persons with Disabilities were:

Luis Arroyo
John Haupt
Supervisor Willie Johnson, Jr.
Denise Koss
Barbara Leigh
Cheri Mc Grath
Don Richards
Kathryn Zalewski

Absent or Excused:

Deb Falk-Palec
Tom Jacobs
Susan Pickering
Meg Steimle

Staff:

Mike Bonk
Don Natzke

Guests:

William Banach, County Architect
Tracy Harrington, MCTS
Andrzej Walz-Chojnacki

ITEM III APPROVAL OF MINUTES (January)

Commissioner Koss moved to accept the minutes. Vice-Chair Richards accepted the minutes.

ITEM IV SPECIAL REPORT

Mr. Natzke gave a brief introduction of Mr. Banach, who is here to give an update of the construction/remodeling projects at our two Wil-O-Way facilities. Mr. Banach gave an overview of the work at the two WOW facilities. Grant has been delayed due to some extreme weather. A plan of action is under way that should complete this project by the first week of March. Details of the plan were reviewed as well as the percentage of completeness of different parts of the project. Discussion took place regarding the projects at both facilities, the challenges with both projects, the county process required to do these projects, getting projects funded by the county board, having art as part of the project at Underwood, and staff of OPD reviewing the Underwood plans as they're developing – including the potential for art ideas (Commissioner Leigh) to be included.

ITEM V TRANSIT PLUS REPORT

Ms. Harrington indicated that Transit and Transit Plus (TP) has faced numerous challenges this winter. There have been four extreme weather days causing many cancellations and delays with both vans and taxis. Ridership on fixed route and TP were down in January (mostly weather related). New driver training will be starting soon. New hires will be starting soon. Darlene Hall has announced her retirement and there has been a screening of some highly qualified candidates to fill her position. After all the searching, Mr. Don Natzke has accepted the position of Mobility Coordinator and begins on March 4. Mr. Natzke indicated that his moving from Milwaukee County to MCTS is a result of his passion for transit. He's thankful for being able to work with everyone here and in the office for such a long time. The most difficult part about the transition is having to leave friends. Discussion took place regarding Mr. Natzke's new position



and duties, his new contact information, the status of the office's director position and the process for filling. Mr. Natzke gave a brief review of the Southridge situation and all the support from the commissioners and friends. Commissioner Haupt made a video and posted it in You Tube that shows him pushing his wheelchair over all the challenges from the new bus stop at Southridge to the mall itself. This video and posting has resulted in appearances scheduled for TV6 and TV12 to talk about the video and the difficulties of this push from the bus stop to the mall. The video was played for the commissioners (www.bit.ly/Simon_Says). Discussion took place regarding the video, the major impact of seeing the struggles, the reason the video was done (to highlight the length, incline, proximity to moving vehicles and difficulty dealing with all of that over 1,000 feet to the mall), the video clearly showing that this new bus stop location is not safer for pedestrians, the difference between an outdoor uphill push versus an indoor flat mall floor push, the County Executive hosted a meeting recently regarding this issue and a letter going out from him, the DOJ involvement, talking with the ICC to get the Mayor's involved in transit in their cities, the video being done in such a way as to highlight the problem reasonably, used a good tone and didn't exaggerate the problem.

ITEM VI COMMITTEE UPDATES

Mr. Natzke indicated that no committees met during this past month. The Department of Administrative Services (DAS) has begun doing quarterly department meetings. The next meeting will be hosted by a Wil-O-Way facility. Due to county rules, the county cannot purchase and provide refreshments like coffee, cookies, etc. The commission might want to consider supporting the effort of providing the funding for refreshments as a means of good PR to many new visitors, and potential new renters, to the facility.

ITEM VII REVIEW OFFICE REPORT (January)

Mr. Natzke indicated that Mr. Bonk could give a report on the snowmobile fest. Mr. Bonk gave a brief review of this year's event. The event is put on every year by the Franklin Snowmobile Club (Rolling Dice) in cooperation with Easter Seals. Food and drink were provided to everyone. The event was a huge success. The community came out in large numbers (180) in fact some people were calling their friends from the event inviting them to come. The spring program sign-up numbers were highlighted. The community events continue to grow in interest. Mr. Natzke indicated that we should begin thinking about the next RFP and contract with regards to what's working well and what could be done better and/or different.

ITEM VIII COMMISSION DISCUSSIONS

Mr. Natzke indicated that the commission position opening has been forwarded to the County Executive and the process is in his hands.

ITEM IX OTHER MATTERS BY COMMISSIONERS

ITEM X OTHER MATTERS BY THE PUBLIC

ITEM XI ADJOURN

Vice-Chair Richards adjourned the meeting at 2:28pm. The next meeting of the Commission will be Monday, March 10, 2014 at 1:00pm at St. John's Properties (1800 N. Prospect Ave, Milwaukee).

Submitted by: Tim Ochnikowski, Staff to the Commission